

Helpful Tips for Working from Home

When there are multiple people in the home using technology at the same time, the entire system for connectivity can be strained. This is especially true when schools are closed or there are situations that cause an increased number of people to work from home.

Below is an overview of some of the reasons why this happens and some potential solutions that might help.

- **Home**
 - People may find their home internet is not keeping up with multiple people doing their work or schooling at home. This can be especially true with wireless.
- **Neighborhood**
 - Most home internet services such as DSL or Cable share bandwidth with large areas outside of their home. This means other families staying home and increasing their bandwidth usage affects you as well.
- **ISP**
 - Your ISP has their own bandwidth and hardware limitations. This can be especially true if you have a small ISP in a rural area.
- **Platforms**
 - Many of the services we use on the Internet use the same platforms. For example, Netflix, Facebook and Twitter all use Amazon's servers extensively. This can cause bottlenecks as usage spikes.
- **Services**
 - Certain services such as Teams, Skype, Zoom, GoToMeeting are seeing huge increases in their usage which can cause slowness and connection issues.

Ideas that might help:

- **Use wired internet connections as much as possible**
 - If possible, plug your work computer on a wired connection. If that isn't feasible, it's still helpful to plug in other devices when possible. The more devices you have on wired connections, the better your wireless devices will work.



LifeStance

HEALTH

- **Disconnect unnecessary devices/services**
 - Games can take up a massive amount of bandwidth that can slow your internet connection to a crawl. While your kids might be doing their schoolwork now, they might also be downloading huge games in the background for when their schoolwork is done and that is slowing everything down. Try unplugging your PlayStation or Xbox. Also, check for game services such as Steam on all your computers and make sure they aren't downloading.
- **Limit streaming**
 - If someone in your house is watching Netflix, that's going to eat up a lot of your bandwidth. Try to limit that during working hours.
 - Music streaming services such as Spotify and Pandora don't use a ton of bandwidth, but it still uses some, especially if everyone in the house is doing it. Try downloading a playlist and using only that during work hours.
- **Try alternate services**
 - Voice calls use much less bandwidth than video calls so using those when possible should help. If you have options for what services you use for things like video conferencing it can help to be flexible and switch between them if one is having issues at that moment.
- **Upgrade your WIFI**
 - If you are using your ISP's wireless or a 10 year old wireless router, you might find some significant performance increase from spending a couple hundred dollars on a new wireless setup for your home.

Additional tips for COVID-19 emergency response:

Many service providers are offering additional support to households in need of additional resources during the COVID-19 national emergency. Check with your service providers for your cell phone as well as your home internet service. Some cell phone companies are waiving overage charges for data plans and internet providers are offering increased bandwidth without extended commitment. This may allow you to use your cell phone data plan for some services while using your home internet or wireless connection for others to distribute the load.